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YONGE STREET
MERCHANT AND PEDESTRIAN STUDY

PART 1: THE MERCHANTS

PREPARED FOR
THE CITY OF TORONTO
YONGE STREET IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

MICHAEL HEITSHU
ERIN O'CONNOR
GLEN RIGBY

ON BEHALF OF
N. BARRY LYON CONSULTANTS

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box 30, suite 3100
the cadillac fairview tower
20 queen street west
toronto, ontario M5H 1V5
(416) 598-8181

n. barry lyon
consultants limited

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PREFACE

This study deals with the specifics issues concerning the section of Yonge Street between College Street and Queen Street from the merchants' viewpoint, including the street's problems. Considered in terms of statistics and remarks, the street may seem lifeless. Yet the most important aspects of Yonge Street are its vitality and its success both as a place to do business and as a main street. In the final analysis, the vitality and success of the street are the most important findings of our study. This section of Yonge Street is by no means either 'falling apart' or in trouble. Instead, it is a strong economic unit that pays almost $6 million dollars annually in taxes. The market has determined the most viable stores and as a result the stores that are on Yonge Street in general do well. More importantly, it has in abundance the most vital economic resource a street can have: people.

Yonge Street has played a major role in the history of Toronto. It embodies that vitality and that safety of downtown Toronto which no other major North American city can match. Yonge Street's problem is its image. The street is better than most people think it is. The people who see the street daily, particularly the merchants, know that it is a safe and vibrant focus for our city.

Yonge Street, of course, is not perfect. Its' faults are glaring and numerous. These include obvious social and aesthetic problems with prostitution; people who appear threatening; vagrants and panhandlers who many people find difficult to accept; and some abandoned and deteriorating stores.

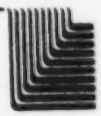
However, these faults, no matter how grave they may seem, do not detract from Yonge Street's strengths. Tourists and other people are coming to Yonge Street in such ever increasing numbers that many people feel it is essential that the sidewalks be widened. Furthermore, over 70% of the merchants report that their business is the same or even better than previous years. Obviously, Yonge Street is as strong as ever.

Yonge Street appears to be one of those rare entities that people love to hate. Some people whom we have talked to on Yonge Street seem to come to there to be shocked at its faults. Often they will come back a month later to be shocked even more. This illustrates the strange relationship Torontonians have with Yonge Street: we hate its faults, and yet we'd hate even more to see it fundamentally changed.

This strange relationship with Yonge Street is probably the result of the fact that the street is the most exciting place to be in Toronto. But part of what creates that excitement is the street's ability to show the true nature of urban life. On Yonge Street our sins are projected from neon signs. Many people thrive on the artificial tension. Temptation lurks in doorways. All this is not what people admit they like to see, but nevertheless it is exciting.

Yonge Street, then, is not in decline. It may not please our sentiments of what is proper, but people keep coming back. The street is one of the strengths of our city. In fact, Yonge Street is proof that we are a cosmopolitan city.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS



SUMMARY

This study is the result of interviews with 116 of the Yonge Street merchants who conduct business from College Street to Queen Street. The study was requested by the Yonge Street Implementation Committee in order to create an awareness of the feelings and views of those merchants.

The merchants were extremely receptive to this study. There was, however, a level of dissatisfaction with the rate at which the city's changes are being implemented. The merchants expressed a general desire to be more involved in determining the future of their street.

The complaint most often expressed by the merchants concerns the effect of certain types of people, who were often dubbed "undesirables", on the business atmosphere of the street. The merchants hope these people can be discouraged. Some merchants feel that an increased police presence is needed to deal with "undesirables". Many of the merchants are worried that such people give the street a bad image.

Most merchants suggest some physical improvements that could be made to improve the buiness atmosphere of the street. Increasing the numbers of pedestrians on the street is emphasized the most. Many of the merchants feel that accessibility could be improved by improving the ease of walking. Since the merchants place little importance on automobile traffic, most are in favour of increasing access by widening the sidewalks and reducing Yonge Street to two lanes.

In addition, some merchants expressed a desire to see the appearance of Yonge Street upgraded. Examples of upgrading include more trees and other greenery, a more attractive sidewalk, and an improvement in the appearance of stores in general. These actions are considered vital to bringing "a better class of customer" to Yonge Street.

The merchants think that the best way of implementing these improvements is through the unified effort of businessmen. Almost every merchant thinks the City has an important role to play on Yonge Street, yet most are also of the opinion that the final responsibility for improving the street is their own. However, there is no clear idea from the merchants of how this can be done. They are not unreceptive to organizing, merely unsure of how it can be done effectively because of the constant turnover of merchants on the street.

There is a general note of optimism among the merchants concerning the direction that Yonge Street is taking. The volume of tourist traffic has increased significantly in the past two years. Many merchants in the south end of the study area see the Elgin-Wintergarden as a major positive influence in the future of Yonge Street.

A majority of the merchants feel that Yonge Street is changing for the better. The feeling is that the problems of Yonge street are all temporary, and can be solved as they always have been in the past. Furthermore, most of the businesses in the study area are doing well. Yonge Street is still a good street for business, and most of the merchants feel that it always will be.

RECOMENDATIONS

1a. DIALOGUE. Since the merchants are concerned about Yonge Street, and show an interest in discussion, this Committee should undertake to establish immediately an active dialogue with the merchants. It would help to enforce the image of City Hall as a place of action if the merchants are aware of the process and activities that go on there. The Yonge Street Implementation Committee should consider actively promoting itself as a forum through which Yonge Street can express their views on the street to City Hall.

1b-1. NEWSLETTER. This committee should assume the responsibility of communicating to the merchants the City's proposed and approved actions for the street. This can be achieved in the form of a quarterly newsletter. In addition, the newsletter could include a summary of approved new construction on the street.
1b-2. MERCHANT COMMENT. This newsletter should include a section that explains some of the City's proposed actions for the street, and then provide an opportunity for the merchants to comment on them. This can be done with a mail-in form or a special telephone number.
1b-3. WRITING AND DISTRIBUTION. This newsletter should be written by a person or persons familiar with the street in co-operation with the Committee. The newsletter should be distributed to Yonge Street merchants.

1c. BLOCK MEETINGS. In recognition of the different natures of each section of Yonge Street in the study area, the Committee or the ward aldermen should consider organizing periodic meetings in which the merchants of each block can discuss the issues that affect them. In order to allow as many merchants as possible the chance to participate, these meetings should occur after normal business hours and during the early part of the week. Such meetings would give the merchants the opportunity to meet each other, to discuss common needs and goals, and to discuss City policy that affects Yonge Street. These meetings could provide the forum needed for the merchants to organize themselves into active units.

2. SIDEWALK WIDENING. Due to the high level of merchant and pedestrian support, it is recommended that the sidewalk widening on Yonge Street proceed as proposed.

3. POLICING. It is felt by both merchants and pedestrians that policing on the street has to be more visible and more sidewalk related. Consideration should be given by this Committee to the undertaking of further discussions with the Police Department in order to secure more regular and more frequent foot patrols on the street.

4. STREET VENDORS. The vendors should be encouraged to take advantage of existing designated vendors' locations on the sidestreets adjacent to Yonge Street. One way of meeting this objective would be to strictly enforce the existing by-law forbidding vendors from conducting business on Yonge Street.

5. BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT. The by-laws governing certain aspects of the street, such as those that regulate vendors, and those that establish a tow-away zone

in the delivery lanes, should be better enforced. Currently, some by-laws applicable to Yonge Street are in place, but due to limited enforcement, the problems these by-laws were meant to control are virtually uncontrolled.

6. BICYCLE RACKS. Many pedestrians stressed that Yonge Street should be more conducive to bicycling. One way of attracting bicyclists to Yonge Street would be to install bike racks. These racks should be located on side streets in order to avoid having them interfere with pedestrian traffic.

7. PARKING. Many merchants expressed a concern that the lack of affordable parking hurt their business. If such parking were available, these merchants feel they could more successfully attract customers who currently stay away from Yonge Street because of the difficulty of auto access.

8. DIRECTORIES. The City should have more Yonge Street directories simular to the one already in place in front of College Park. However, a design team should consider that the present directory is of a poor design because it has a nearly horizontal surface that attracts dirt. Consideration should be given to installing directories on unused walls of stores and buildings. These walls could be on either Yonge Street or on sidestreets close to Yonge Street. The directories should be placed at regular intervals on the street. Different directories could be placed in nearby hotels and tourist attractions. These directories should be used to provide a better image of Yonge Street. Also, signs could be placed on the street to publicize off-street attractions which pedestrians often don't know about.

9a. SUNDAY OPENINGS. In recognition of Yonge Street's high tourist traffic and the requests of people interviewed, consideration should be given to declaring the area of Yonge Street from College to Dundas a tourist area in order to allow Sunday openings.

9b. As a means of serving the interests of both tourists and Torontonians, consideration should be given to allowing only book and record stores on Yonge Street to open on Sundays.

10a. SNOW REMOVAL. The Committee should ask Public Works to report on the feasibility and cost to the City of assuming the responsibility for clearing the Yonge Street sidewalks. Consideration should be given to a levy to offset some of the costs of such a service. Cleaning Yonge Street's sidewalk could be a trial for the viability of the City assuming the responsibility of snow removal in other areas.

10b. The City should consider a quicker and more efficient way of removing the snowbanks of plows from the Yonge Street sidewalks. Included in its considerations should be utilizing such equipment as 'Metromelt'.

11a. SUMMER STREET FESTIVAL. The City could promote the street by organizing an annual summer festival on Yonge Street. This festival could include the blocking of the street to automobiles and encourage both sidewalk sales and open-air concerts. Such a festival would attract people of all ages, both from Toronto, and other cities. It would be short enough to avoid some of the problems associated with the previous Yonge Street malls.

11b. FESTIVAL BOARD. A "Yonge Street Festival Board" should be established comprising of:

1. minimum of 4 merchants
2. the ward aldermen
3. police representative
4. community services representative
5. Public Works representative
6. organizers hired by either the city, the merchants, or both

11c. FESTIVAL TIMES. Possible times for festival are the last week of June, or the third week of July.

11d. FEATURES. Possible features are entertainers, musicians and live theatre.

11e. SPECIAL PROMOTIONS. Co-incident with this festival could be such co-ordinated street wide special promotions as sidewalk sales.

11f. LOCATION. The area that could be included is Yonge Street from Gerrard to Dundas. The choice of this area would minimize the inconvenience to traffic flow in the downtown core.

11g. PROMOTION. Promotion of this festival could include banners, radio and newspaper advertisements, posters in all store windows, and a special draw with prizes donated by the merchants. Also, "Yonge Street Money" should be considered. This promotional "money" could be published in Toronto newspapers along with a list of the participating merchants who would accept it. A limited number would be accepted depending upon the dollar value of a purchase. For example, one "Yonge Street Dollar" could be applied to each ten dollars in a purchase.

12. WINTERFEST. Consideration should be given to the creation of an annual winter festival on Yonge Street. This festival would serve the purpose of attracting business to Yonge during the period when it suffers the most from competition with indoor malls--the winter. It should coincide with the December holiday season shopping period and would give the Yonge Street merchants an opportunity to do more business during this peak time. In addition, a "Winterfest" would promote Yonge Street as a family-oriented Street and it would be designed to attract people from the outskirts of Toronto back to the downtown core to do their Christmas shopping.

12b. WINTERFEST PERIOD. The festival should extend from up to two weeks previous to Christmas in order to attract people during the prime shopping period. Furthermore, it should continue for up to one week after Christmas so that the merchants could use the opportunity to have further sales and to attract bargain hunters.

12c. WINTERFEST BOARD. The Yonge Street Winterfest Board could comprise:

1. a minimum of four merchants
2. the ward aldermen
3. a police representative

4. a community services representative
5. a Public Works representative
6. organizers
7. Santa Claus whenever any promotional photographs are taken.

12d. FEATURES. Some possible features of this Winterfest are:

1. Carollers drawn from the local high school choirs and church choirs.
2. A window display contest for the merchants. Ontario College of Art students could be asked to donate their services and so gain good experience.
3. Bands and dancers from various cultural groups could perform Christmas related entertainment. A canopy could be provided to protect them from the elements.
4. Various contests could be held. These would be open to the public, and would feature skills that would attract the attention of the media. One example is a "hearty ho-ho -ho" contest.
5. Candy canes could be given by the merchants to children when their parents make a purchase. This feature could be included in any advertising, as it would stress the fact that families are welcome.
6. The street could be closed to automobiles at certain times during the festival to accomodate additional pedestrian traffic and events. This closing would be most essential on the weekends and during such non-rush hour peak shopping periods as Boxing Day. Open air horse-drawn carriage rides could be offered at a minimal cost.
7. Each business could be encouraged to put up a tree inside their stores. A tree-trimming contest could be held. In addition, a food drive should be held, with staff and customers placing foodstuffs underneath the trees. These foodstuffs would then be distributed to the various agencies that provide Christmas food baskets.
8. Red and green ribbons could be placed outside the participating stores both to identify them as well as to add a festive air to the area.
9. Temporary hot chocolate stands could be set up for the duration of the festival.

12e. SNOW REMOVAL DURING WINTERFEST. An important prerequisite to this proposal is the assurance that the street and sidewalks will be in optimum condition. To ensure this the City should undertake the responsibility of snow removal on the sidewalks during the festival.

12f. LOCATION. The area of the festival should be from College Street to Queen Street, with traffic blocked during necessary periods. Traffic should be blocked from Gerrard Street to Dundas Street only. This would ensure a minimum of traffic interruption.

12g. PROMOTION. Promotion of this event should include radio and print advertisements. As well,the contests and events planned should designed with an eye to potential media opportunities.

13. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS. Posts could be erected from Gerrard to College where necessary to allow the lights put up every year by the Downtown Business Council and others to be extended to College Street. Currently, the merchants from

Gerrard to College are billed for the service, but because there are not enough buildings to attach the lights to north of Gerrard, the merchants and Yonge Street of this section do not benefit from this "avenue of light".

14. MEDIAN STRIP. The Committee should pursue the construction of the median strip on Yonge from College to Gerrard as is proposed. This median would provide not only a safety island for pedestrians crossing the street but also an attractive entrance to the "strip".

15a. MAINTENANCE OF CITY PROPERTY. The City has already placed many pieces of furniture and amenities on the street. However, once placed they have been allowed to deteriorate. The committee should consider asking Public Works to report on the possibility of a more regular cleaning and refurbishing of the City's property on Yonge Street. This would help to improve the appearance of Yonge Street.

15b. WATCHDOG COMMITTEE. The Committee should give consideration to organizing a group of merchants and City representatives to carry out regular walking tours of Yonge Street in order to check and monitor the maintenance and condition of City property on Yonge Street. These tours should be carried out approximately every 3 months. The watchdog committee could consist of:

1. an unlimited number of interested merchants
2. one of the ward alderman
3. representative of Planning and Development
4. representative of Public Works
5. representative of City Property

This committee would ensure that the City actively monitors the condition of City property, and the enforcement of by-laws; and would also provide evidence of the City's concern for Yonge Street.

16. MERCHANT SIGNS. Planning and Development should consider allowing more flexible sign by-laws on Yonge Street in order to promote a more lively appearing street. This flexibility could allow some projecting signs and canopies. This would provide some shelter from the elements for pedestrians and a more colourful and exciting atmosphere on Yonge Street.

17. THE COLONIAL. Since the Elgin-Wintergarden has proven to be a positive addition to the street because of the people it attracts to the street, consideration should be given by the Committee to encouraging the use of The Colonial by the private sector. This City-owned building is suitable for many different uses, including theatre, live music, and other forms of stage entertainment. The re-opening of the Colonial could bring more people to the area and could re-introduce live music to the street.

18. GARBAGE PICK-UP. The committee should give consideration to asking Public Works to have a pick-up of Yonge Street garbage in the early evening in order to avoid unsightly accumulation of refuse deposited on the street when a store closes.

19. PUBLIC WASHROOMS. There are a large number of pedestrians on Yonge Street but no public washrooms. Some businesses have washrooms for their customers, but due to the absence of public washrooms, these businesses have been forced

to provide their facilities to pedestrians whether they are customers or not. This high level of usage has resulted in the businesses having difficulty keeping their washrooms properly stocked. The City should give consideration to establishing a public washroom on or reasonably near to Yonge Street between College Street and Queen Street. This washroom should be well marked and easily accesible. It should also have a uniformed attendant on duty at all times in order to ensure it is kept clean and to prevent vandalism. Moreover, there should be video surveillance to detect serious trouble.

20. FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GRANTS. The Committee should investigate various forms of funding that could be used to improve Yonge Street and to assist merchants in improving their stores. There may be grants available to help defray the costs of such proposals as the street festivals. Employment programmes may help to subsidize wages, and arts grants may provide funding for the live performances. The Committee should consider if the 'Main Street Ontario' programme is applicable to Yonge Street.

21. COMMENDATION FOR BUILDING IMPROVEMENT. The Committee should acknowledge the improvements made to storefronts on Yonge Street by the owners and merchants. Those people that the Committee feel have made a positive contribution to the appearance and spirit of Yonge Street should receive a commendation. The commendation could be in the form of a framed letter from the Mayor's office. The "Watchdog Committee" could submit the names of deserving stores to the Committee for consideration.

RESULTS OF MERCHANTS SURVEY

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PURPOSE OF STUDY

1. NEED FOR MERCHANT'S VIEWPOINT. There was a concern on the part of the Yonge Street Implementation Committee that the merchants view was not always taken into full consideration. It was felt that the study would reflect the weight the Committee places on the merchants' point of view. The merchants' feelings and ideas are important because their stores are what defines Yonge Street. The merchants define the character of their stores, and the combination of these stores' characters plays a large role in establishing the nature of the street. The purpose of this study wa to go out to the Yonge Street business community, to obtain their opinions about possible actions, and to bring these opinions back to the Committee.

2. AREA OF STUDY. The area of the study was the section of Yonge St. from College Street to Queen Street excluding College Park and the Eaton Centre. This area was selected because:

1. It is the major focus of Yonge St. When many people, especially tourists think of Yonge Street, they think of this section.
2. Most of the problems associated with Yonge Street are found in this area.
3. It is the area that has not yet been the object of extensive improvements.
4. It is the area of the proposed sidewalk widening.
5. This area of Yonge Street has a high level of tourist traffic. The Eaton Centre is the largest tourist attraction in Toronto.

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN OF SURVEY. Since the purpose of the survey was to include the merchants in the decision making process at City Hall, the questions were designed so that the merchants could freely express to the Committee both what actions they felt were necessary for healthy business on Yonge Street and their attitudes toward Yonge Street. Each section of the survey contains open-ended questions to encourage the merchants to give detailed answers. A pilot survey indicated questions which needed clarification and other questions which needed to be added.

PARTICIPATION. All merchants in the study area were approached. The study team returned to each store as often as necessary in order to conduct the survey at the merchants' convenience and to allow everyone a chance to participate. 95% of the merchants who were approached completed some or all of the survey. Only the owner of Cinema 2000 refused to participate. The responses from the merchants were collated by the study team and examined for trends and recommendations.

EXPLANATIONS. The merchants were asked the questions and, when necessary, the study team expanded on the intent of some of the questions. The questions expanded upon are: 3a, 5, 6a, 8a, 10, 11a, 12a, 13a, and 16.

EXPLANATIONS GIVEN. For 3a, if the respondent did not know of the City's actions to improve Yonge Street, the respondent was told that the question referred to physical improvements. In 5, if there was some confusion,the question was rephrased to "Does the Street seem different to you?"

Prior to asking 6a, the interviewer enquired about the length of time the business had been on Yonge to see if the question was applicable. For 8a, merchants' comments about street vendors were recorded in addition to their suggestions about possible ways of regulating the vendors.

After question 10, some merchants were asked if, in the long run, the Eaton Centre has had a positive effect on Yonge Street. When 11a was asked, the merchants were told that the proposal was to widen the sidewalk 3 feet on both sides of the street from College Street to Dundas Street, and 6 feet on the east side of Yonge from Dundas to Queen. It was made clear that as a result the road would be narrowed to one lane of traffic each way.

For 12a, it was emphasized that the importance of automobile traffic on Yonge Street was in question, not the importance of automobile traffic in general. It was explained for 13a that prohibiting automobiles would make that section of Yonge Street from Gerrard to Dundas into a pedestrian mall and that a temporary mall could last for any length of time.

After 16 was answered, the term B.I.A. was defined. The merchants were told that forming a Business Improvement Area would entail all the merchants in the designated section being polled, and that 2/3 of them would have to approve of such an area being declared. It was stressed that the organizers would be from

the merchants themselves. They were told that a levy would be placed on their municipal taxes, and that this money would be pooled for use as the merchants collectively decided. Two of the examples of B.I.A.s cited were Old Cabbagetown and Bloor West Village.

SETTING. The interviews were conducted in the merchant's business, and as informally as possible to encourage the merchants to expand fully upon their ideas.

AWARENESS OF CITY'S ACTIONS

Question 1: Are you familiar with the City's actions to improve Yonge Street?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	42	64	10	116
%	36.2	55.2	8.6	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-they're trying to broaden the sidewalks
-they've done nothing and let the hookers run in the street
-not even aware of what they're doing
-haven't noticed anything.
-what are you trying to improve?

Question 3a: Do you feel the City's actions to improve the street are moving quickly enough?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	19	61	16	96
%	19.8	63.5	16.7	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-vendors are still constantly blocking lobby and doorways
-like most City Hall matters,there is too much red tape.
-they haven't done very much--tourists still go to the Eaton Centre and don't come out
-we're pleased that the street cleaners come by every day
-ten years ago the D.B.C. prepared a positive action programme, but I haven't seen anything yet
-the sidewalk is poorly maintained
-they haven't done anything since the last survey
-do something before the summer comes
-it's dragging

COMMENTARY

A disturbingly high number of Yonge Street merchants are not aware of the City's efforts to improve Yonge Street. There are a limited number of merchants with a clear grasp of both the issues surrounding Yonge Street and the City's plans for the street. These merchants usually obtained their information from such organizations as the Downtown Business Council. The majority of merchants who responded that they are aware of the City's actions, however, were not able to provide an example, or in some cases, no examples since the clean-up of the sex industry in the late 1970's. Even those who had some grasp of the issues appeared unsure, but mentioned actions that weren't specific, such as saying the City is trying to discourage prostitution. The issue that most of the merchants know about is the widening of the sidewalks, but again,

this is only a small portion of the merchants.

Other concerns raised were regard the City's lack of commitment to enforcing its own by-laws governing street vendors, and the failure of the City to move some of the panhandlers and vagrants. In general the merchants expressed a feeling that City Hall is disinterested in the street.

Most of the merchants have not concerned themselves with battles inside City Hall. They are only concerned with results, and results are not something which they are seeing on Yonge Street. Very few of the merchants who showed a knowledge of the City's actions think that the City is moving quickly enough to implement its plans. They are generally either frustrated or cynical or both. Those who have few criticisms of the City's speed also, in general, have little knowledge of what the City is proposing to do.

CHANGES ON YONGE STREET

Question 5a: Is Yonge Street changing?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	74	28	10	112
%	66.1	25	8.9	100

Question 5b: If yes, how is it changing?

Responses:	BETTER	WORSE	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	40	21	13	74
%	54	28.4	17.6	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-Yonge Street is improving - people are less afraid
-there was bad publicity in the 70's, but people are less intimidated now
-business is doing well--more people are coming here
-the Elgin theatre has brought a better type of customer
-it's cleaner but there are still too many 'hookers'
-years ago, Yonge Street was the place to be, but now it is one big bargain basement
-it could go either way--excitement draws people at night, while there's a different crowd during the day
-type of people is improving
-fewer hookers now
-more tourists
-It's better--the parkettes and benches made it look nicer to tourists
-its worse. There are empty buildings. The low end of the market is here now, for example junk stores.
-better stores are coming in.

COMMENTARY

Most of the merchants feel that Yonge Street is changing. However, there are a number of different ideas, even among those who agree it is changing. Some merchants are not sure if it is getting better or worse. They think it is simply different from what it was in the past.

Of those who responded to the question of whether Yonge Street is getting better or worse, about a third think it is getting worse. Those that think Yonge is getting worse cite three general examples. Most prevalent is a concern about the types of people that frequent Yonge Street. These people are most frequently refered to as the "undesirables", namely, prostitutes and pimps, drug dealers, vagrants and panhandlers, and "street kids". The merchants' concern is that these "undesirables" give Yonge Street an undeservedly bad image. These people are the most prevalent image associated with Yonge Street for many occasional travellers to the street.

A second concern is about the types and quality of stores on Yonge Street. There is a concern, especially among the long standing and high-end-of-market merchants, that Yonge Street is becoming "the bargain basement of the city". It is felt by some merchants that Yonge Street is attracting only the low-end-of-market customers, and that this is hurting their business.

A final, although certainly less prevalent concern, is that Yonge Street is attracting too many of the same types of stores. There are two reasons why the merchants think that this is a cause for concern. First, as more stores of the same type open, the competition inevitably increases, lessening the profits and stability of those stores. For example, the fast food industry on Yonge is fiercely competing for the same potential customers. The marginal businesses are hard pressed to survive with a new idea. According to one merchant, this competitiveness has made Yonge Street a "fast food jungle". A second concern about the decline of diversity is that soon there will be "nothing but junk food and jewelery exchanges" on Yonge Street.

Almost double the number of merchants think that the street is changing for the better. Some merchants, in saying that Yonge Street is changing for the better, recall the days when the "sex industry" was more prevalent. The Yonge Street of today is much more appealing to them. The improvement of such sidestreets as McGill, Granby, Elm and Gould have added greenery to the street. There is less of a concern, these merchants feel, about crime. More importantly, the street is less offensive. As a result, people are less afraid and certainly less intimidated. This brings more people to the street, and more importatnly, more customers.

It is also felt by some that the street has become cleaner. There are almost no complaints of litter on the street. Furthermore, most of the stores are in reasonable to excellent physical condition. There is concern about abandoned stores, but since there are not very many of these, this is not a major concern. Most importantly, merchants in general think that the street is changing for the better because for most of them business is good. Ultimately, this is the 'bottom line'. In addition, they have high expectations for the future of Yonge Street. The Elgin-Wintergarden, it is hoped, will be a major factor in the improvement of the south end of the study area.

Yonge Street's problem, then, may not be the street itself but the image people have of the street. Bad publicity that started in the 1970's, and continues today, promotes an image that, to the merchants and the study group, doesn't seem to be the reality. Among the merchants there is in general a spirit of optimism.

BUSINESS VOLUME

Question 6a: What is happening to your business volume compared to previous years?

Responses:	UP	DOWN	SAME	TOTAL
#	40	28	36	104
%	38.5	26.9	34.6	100

Question 6b: Is this because of Yonge Street?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	38	41	14	93
%	40.9	44.1	15	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS COMMENTS

-good in summer, bad in winter
-business is about the same, although it was projected to be more.
-there is high competition, with a lot of undercutting by non-specialty stores that don't go by the suggested retail price
-some merchants have chosen the wrong kind of business for Yonge
-very low mark-up, and yet still can't compete
-not enough parking, and it is too expensive
-success depends on good business practice
-no idea whatsoever of what's causing the turnover

COMMENTARY

Business is good on Yonge Street. 38% of the merchants, when asked to compare their current volume of business to previous years' volume, said it is up, while 35% said it is the same. However, 27% of the merchants said business volume was down over previous years.

There are a number of reasons for this. First, the people are there. Yonge Street is still the place to be. Therefore, the success of the store is determined by the success of the merchant at drawing people into the store. For example, the high profile advertisers on Yonge seem to do quite well, as do such stores as men's clothing shops that have developed a loyal clientele.

Secondly, tourism is up. It was estimated that up to a quarter of the money in the tills of some stores in the study area is American. Tourists love Yonge Street, and the merchants love tourists. It seems to be a mutually compatible relationship, resulting in more business for the merchants.

Finally, the production of "Cats" at the Elgin Theatre is having an impact on the street. There are people on Yonge Street before and after the show who otherwise wouldn't be there. There are not yet any businesses on Yonge that have opened recently with the intention of serving these people. It is possible that there is caution about opening a business that could potentially falter when "Cats" finishes its run. However, the businesses that are already on Yonge and that cater to this crowd are doing substantially better, and the merchants on the south end of the study area are optimistic that this is the start of a revitalization of Yonge Street.

STREET VENDORS

Question 8a: Do you feel that street vendors have a permanent role to play in the Yonge Street environment?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	54	38	6	98
%	55.1	38.8	6.1	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-Some look good, others look seedy;some improve Yonge's atmosphere, while others worsen it
-they block traffic and worsen congestion. Keep them off the well travelled areas of the sidewalk.
-they add to the street. Control their numbers and keep a distance between them. Put them in stands.
-Limit them to handicrafts and have a vendor's organization.
-Get rid of the vendors and leave Yonge Street to the merchants. They block doorways. They pay no overhead and undercut the merchants. Cops won't do anything about them even when they're asked to.
-The sidewalk was meant for pedestrians. Enforce the laws in place and make them move along every thirty minutes.
-There's no need for regulation. Vendors add color to Yonge Street instead of begging on it.
-They don't pay taxes so they shouldn't use public property. They're unattractive. Put them in designated areas.
-Allocate them spots on or off the street.
-Don't really mind them.

COMMENTARY

Almost every merchant has an opinion about the street vendors of Yonge Street. 55% of the merchants thought that vendors have a role to play in the Yonge Street environment, while 38% think that they do not. However, most of the merchants who approved of the vendors think that the vendors ought to be regulated, and that the regulations ought to be enforced. Vendors provide an experience for tourists and pedestrians that gives Toronto a good look, especially if the vendors are kept attractive, and provide a unique product. One merchant said that some vendors, like the popcorn vendors, provide a sideshow in themselves. After all, vendors base their business on providing what the pedestrians want. It is this variety of experiences on Yonge Street that makes it a popular tourist attraction, and it is an experience like Yonge Street that makes Toronto such a popular destination for tourists.

A lot of the supportive merchants admire the entrepreneurial spirit of the vendors. They may not like all the aspects of street vending, but they feel that it is better that these people work rather than accept unemployment. Some merchants aren't opposed to the vendors working on Yonge itself, so long as they don't block the entrances of stores. Finally some merchants accepted vendors simply because they see vendors as a natural part of any major city.

Although the vendors are accepted by a majority of the merchants, the latter stress a need for more effective regulation or co-ordination. For example, the vendor's kiosk at Gould Street is popular, and some merchants say they would like to see more of these designated areas. Vendors are most unpopular when they are in doorways or impeding pedestrian traffic. Most merchants realized this is not permitted, and complain that "the police are dragging their feet" when the merchants complain. Other merchants were upset by the vendors competitive advantage. The vendors don't have to pay rent or taxes and can operate on the street where the people are. Some merchants said it doesn't look as good if the vendors are just junk peddlars. One merchant said the role of the vendors is to serve the tourists by selling unique goods, not sunglasses. Finally, the appearance of the vendors' displays have to be kept at a high level. If they aren't properly designed and maintained, the appearance of Yonge Street itself declines.

There are a significant number of merchants, on the other hand, who think street vendors have no role to play in the Yonge Street environment. One merchant described them as "pests". He says they attract crowds which block sidewalks. Others say vendors are dirty or ragtag and give the street a cheap image. Finally some merchants don't like vendors who compete with the stores. They feel that Yonge Street is a business area and not a free-for-all market place.

BUSINESS TURNOVER

Question 9a: Do you feel that there is a high turnover of Yonge Street businesses?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	57	43	10	110
%	51.8	39.1	9.1	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-It's fairly stable.
-Too much competition from Eaton's and suburban malls.
-Only restaurants have short life spans.
-Owners think they can have an easy success on Yonge because it is so busy. You have to be very competitive,with better deals.
-It's about 20% turnover in the last three years--which is pretty average
-The store that failed was not right for Yonge Street. Yonge Street is a good place for business.
-The rents are too high and there's not enough volume.

COMMENTARY

There is no clear concensus on whether there is a high turnover of Yonge Street businesses. 52% think that there is, while 39% think it is normal or better. In fact, the response given has a lot to do with the type of business the merchant is in. A lot of the smaller fast food restauranters think that the turnover is very high, yet some of the more established merchants think that while some stores change, this is not unreasonable when one considers both the number of long standing merchants and the constantly changing nature of the street.

Those who think that there is a high turnover attribute it to a number of reasons. Some blamed the high rents and taxes. These merchants feel that it is very difficult to keep prices low, an essential prerequisite for surviving on Yonge Street, with such a high overhead. One merchant says that "survivability depends on rent". Others blame the stiff competition between many stores of the same type in the same area. This competition forces merchants to work with as small a mark-up as possible in order to survive, and as a result these merchants depend on a very high volume of business. If for one of a number of reasons business drops off, it may be impossible for the merchant to continue covering his overhead. Finally, some merchants consider the high turnover to be a business tactic of certain kinds of businesses. For example, discount stores, one merchant thinks, are taking over the market. These stores are independently owned so as to make them easier to close after bankruptcy. These stores open with the intention of making a small profit and then closing quickly. These 'fly-by-night' businesses are seen by some to be a major destabilizing force on Yonge Street.

Other merchants think that there is a moderate to high turnover, but blame the

merchants whose businesses have failed. One merchant maintains that many businesses survive a long time, and that survival is determined by the ability of the merchant; it is the merchants' responsibility to draw people into his store. Another merchant believes that failure is caused by trying to sell the wrong product or choosing the wrong location. Some merchants choose Yonge Street without fully analyzing whether their store is viable or not. There is a conception that Yonge Street is "where all the action is", and that anybody can sell on Yonge because of the high volume of pedestrians. More often than not, these merchants fail.

Finally, there are merchants who see nothing unusual about the rate of turnover of Yonge Street businesses. They feel that there is indeed a very visible turnover in the food business, but that most other businesses are reasonablely stable. Even in the food business, the restaurants change names, but the product is basically the same. Survival depends on the ability of the business owner.

EATON CENTRE

QUESTION 10. What could be done to encourage Eaton Centre shoppers to come out onto Yonge Street?

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-Our prices are better than the Eaton Centre's.
-A mall would get people out onto Yonge and increase business.
-Make the street look better. People who own buildings should fix them up.
-Advertise the street as a whole.
-Promote Yonge Street as a place to be.
-Widen the sidewalks. On Saturdays especially, it is impossible to walk on the sidewalk.
-Weather is the only factor.
-You can't compete with the Eaton Centre. Everything is there, and is so close together that no one comes outside.
-The bigger the better, and they're [the Eaton Centre] the biggest.

COMMENTARY

The Eaton Centre has perplexed many Yonge Street merchants. The merchants were asked what could be done to bring customers out of the Eaton Centre and onto Yonge Street. More than one merchant answered that if he knew, he certainly would be doing it already. The merchants were also asked informally if they thought that in the long run the Eaton Centre has helped their business by bringing more people downtown. Over half of those questioned replied that it has. Therefore in one way the Eaton Centre hurts Yonge Street merchants by 'trapping' potential customers in the climate controlled comfort of the enclosed mall, while at the same time helping the merchants by bringing more people downtown and indirectly into his or her store.

There are a number of suggestions concerning ways to attract Eaton Centre shoppers onto Yonge Street. The most common one is to resurrect the Yonge Street Mall. There are a number of reasons given for why this would work. First, it would appeal to people's desire to be outside in the summer. It would provide a wider walking space free from the pollution and noise of cars. It would leave room for benches and trees. And it would allow for street-related businesses for which there is no room on a sidewalk, like sidewalk sales or cafes. Finally, a Yonge Street mall would allow for the open air shows of bands and theatre companies. It should be noted that some merchants feel that the open air shows would be of help even without the mall. Another idea aimed at getting people outside without having traffic prohibited is to make the sidewalk along the side of the Eaton Centre into a parkette by putting in benches and possibly some tables and a drinking fountain. It is possible that this idea might not work because it could attract the people many merchants have dubbed "undesirables". A number of merchants mention widening the sidewalks.

A Yonge Street promotion campaign is seen by some merchants as the solution. It has a number of advantages if the merchants can join together to co-ordinate it. First, it could promote Yonge Street as a place to shop. If this were done through a unified effort, it is possible that more people may come to associate Yonge Street with shopping. Moreover, the advertising campaign could focus on Yonge Street's strengths, for example how inexpensive it is, and how exciting it is. Also, there is a need to counter a still prevalent idea that Yonge Street is bad. The images of the 1970's still haven't faded for some people, and its possible that an advertising campaign would finally bring back some people who haven't been to Yonge in a while.

Quite a few merchants believe that the only way people will come out of the Eaton Centre is if the nature of Yonge Street stores is changed. These merchants complain either that the current Yonge Street stores appeal solely to the low end of the market or that there is no diversity and distinctiveness between the majority of them. An example is the high number of fast food restaurants. The complaint is that Yonge Street as it now stands provides no reason for people to come out on to Yonge other than low prices. Some said that if Yonge Street were to assume a new character, especially along the lines of Bloor Street west of Yonge, then it would provide a viable alternative to the Eaton Centre. Some merchants also think that a diversity of stores would encourage more window shopping because there would be something different to look at in each store window. A distinctive Yonge Street, then, would be a more viable one in the eyes of some merchants.

As mentioned, other merchants feel that nothing can be done. One merchant asserted that "when people want to come out of the Eaton Centre, they will". Some feel that people don't come out in significant numbers at all. They see the direct subway access and the controlled climate as an unbeatable advantage because anything a customer might want is available in there. This is seen as especially so in the winter.

The final group of merchants is convinced that on the whole the Eaton Centre is a good thing for Yonge Street. One merchant said "the more that come to the Eaton Centre, the more that come to Yonge Street." Another said that the Eaton Centre is a magnet for "busloads of tourists" who eventually make their way to Yonge Street.

SIDEWALKS

Question 11a: Would the widening and repaving of Yonge Street sidewalks improve the business atmosphere of the street?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	74	29	10	113
%	65.5	25.7	8.8	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-Easier for pedestrians.
-Streets get crowded--people walk on the road.
-Widened sidewalks lead to increased business.
-Would encourage people to walk on Yonge in the summer.
-Only if there were more police patrols. Get rid of as many cars as possible.
-Anything to increase pedestrians will help.
-It can't hurt.
-There would be disruptions during construction.
-Not widened, just repaired.
-People come anyways regardless of width.
-Widening would not change the type of people on Yonge Street.
-Some people expect the conveniences of auto access.

COMMENTARY

In general, the merchants were positive when asked if the widening of the sidewalk would improve the business atmosphere of the street. 65% of merchants surveyed think it would. However, 26% think widening wouldn't help, or that it would even hurt the business atmosphere of the street. 9% of the merchants surveyed weren't sure what the effect of the widening would be on their business.

IN FAVOUR. The most common reason given for supporting the widening is that it would lessen the pedestrian congestion on the sidewalks. The hope expressed is that wider sidewalks would encourage more people to walk along Yonge Street. One of the merchants made the connection that "more pedestrian traffic means more business." There is also a belief that if Yonge Street were easier to walk down, then more upper end of market customers would venture out. These people, the merchants believe, don't come to Yonge Street because they don't have the enthusiasm needed to deal with the crowds. However, if the sidewalk were wider, these people would, the merchants feel, consider shopping on Yonge Street. The merchants think that attracting such people is one of the keys to the revitalization.

Because the sidewalk widening would reduce automobile traffic, some merchants feel that the business atmosphere would be improved. They feel that the street would be less polluted and less noisy. Sidewalk widening would also help business by encouraging people to get out of their cars to see Yonge Street. It is only on foot, most merchants believe, that the majority of their customers

arrive. Pedestrians are the people who come into the stores.

The widening would not only encourage more people to come out onto the street, but also allow the merchants to do more with the street. For example, sidewalk sales could be held without impeding the flow of pedestrian traffic. The merchants also feel that the widening would make Yonge look more "open". They felt that Yonge would not be perceived as cramped and dirty if there were broad, tree-lined sidewalks in the study area. It is felt that a change in the perception of Yonge would attract a different kind of stores, for example, art galleries and higher-end-of-market restaurants. The merchants feel that the sidewalk widening would be the key to a new trend in the types of businesses that locate on Yonge Street.

Some merchants have no specific ideas about how the sidewalk widening would help their business but are in favor of it. One merchant claims it is "better than nothing". Another said that it may not improve his business that much since Yonge is overcrowded in the evening when his store is closed, but that the widening would make walking easier. As a result, he is in favor of it.

A few merchants are in favor of the widening, but only in conjunction with other improvements. One thinks that the sidewalk widening would work in conjunction with the revival of the street mall. Another thinks it would work if police foot patrols were increased.

OPPOSED. There are three major arguments against the widening of the sidewalks. A number of merchants are concerned that a narrowing of the road would hurt their business. One merchant said that the people on Yonge Street aren't upset by crowds. Others said that their clientele would be upset if they couldn't get to Yonge Street by car. For example, one bar said its clientele is mostly over 25, and that these people like to be able to drive. There is also concern that the narrowing of the road would result in traffic jams on the street. These traffic jams would increase the noise and pollution of the street.

The second reason for being opposed to the widening is that business might suffer during the construction period, and that the merchants would not be able to recover from the slump in business. Finally, a number of merchants think that Yonge Street's major problem is the nature of some of the people who frequent it. They said that it was necessary to change the nature of the street in order to improve the business atmosphere.

IMPORTANCE OF AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC TO BUSINESS

Question 12a: Is the volume of automobile traffic important to your business?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	26	82	5	113
%	23	72.6	4.4	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-people driving look at other people, not the businesses
-business depends more on pedestrians
-cars don't mean business for anyone but the Eaton Centre
-Yonge Street is used for deliveries and people cruising
-people have to drive to carry home bulky items
-some customers do not want to use the TTC.

COMMENTARY

There is a general agreement that the volume of automobile traffic is not important to business on Yonge Street. 73% of the merchants say that it was not important. 23% feel it was, while 4% are not sure.

The merchants who feel that automobile traffic is not important to their business have one main argument. They say that the people driving along Yonge Street are "cruisers" and have no intention of buying anything. Because there is a limited amount of parking, particularly affordable parking, and because there are many 'no stopping' zones, people do not get out of their cars to shop. Customers, be they new ones or repeat customers, come by foot.

There are other merchants who think either that the automobiles driving along Yonge are important to their business or that they would be if there were more parking. They feel that upper end clientele are not willing to use public transit and that parking is necessary for attract these people. Another merchant says that people might be able to see his sign from their cars, and that they may come in if they were to find parking.

A stereo retailer affirms that Yonge Street is important to his business because customers have to get their purchases from the store to their homes.

Finally, one merchant believes that although people may not be customers at a given time, they may see his sign when they drive by, and the next time they are on the street they may come in.

DUNDAS TO GERRARD MALL

Question 13a: Do you think that automobiles should be permanently or temporarily prohibited from Yonge Street?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	52	37	12	101
%	51.5	36.6	11.9	100

SELECTED MERCHANT'S COMMENTS

-it would increase sales due to increased pedestrian traffic
-it should be a temporary summer mall
-it should be open in the morning for deliveries
-could add trees like Sparks Street mall in Ottawa
-it would attract tourists with a taste of Europe
-people could criss-cross street
-cars discourage pedestrians
-it would make Yonge the focus of the city
-don't see purpose in having Yonge Street open to cars when the space is needed for pedestrians
-cruisers add to street
-it didn't go over well last time
-would cause too many loiterers

COMMENTARY

When asked if they think that cars should be temporarily or permanently prohibited from Yonge Street, 51.5% of the merchants said 'yes'. Pedestrians are the merchants' main source of income, so many merchants are willing to make the street more accessible to them. One merchant feels that "a permanent mall would help the business atmosphere, discourage inner-city traffic and that people would not run back to the suburbs." Another merchant said that "pedestrians would zig-zag across the street as well as going up and down the Strip." He also noted that a mall would eliminate the problems of jay-walking; he has seen several people hit by cars in front of his store. Several merchants claim that a mall would make people feel less hurried. If people could stroll comfortably and windowshop without being jostled, they would be attracted to Yonge and be more inclined to buy on Yonge.

The merchants who are opposed to a mall cite the previous mall that was attempted in the early 70's. They say that it attracted loiterers, street kids and drunks who slept on all the benches. They feel that to bring back the mall would increase the number of 'undesireables'.

A lot of the merchants have ideas for part-time malls. They say that a part-time mall would make Yonge a better tourist attraction. Such a mall would lure people out of the Eaton Centre and would increase the businesses' walk-in traffic. Week-end malls were suggested--with the additional comment that Yonge Street's 'Strip' should be recognized as the tourist attraction that it is and

that stores should therefore be allowed to open on Sundays.

Another part-time mall suggested is an afternoon-only mall. This form of mall would permit deliveries in the morning. The people who "cruise" Yonge in the evenings would also be able to continue that past-time. The merchants who suggest such a mall say that workers in the area as well as tourists would be able to enjoy Yonge Street and its shops without worry of crowds and traffic. Large, mobile planters were suggested as an attractive and practical way of closing the street off to traffic.

One proviso that several merchants make is that there would have to be strict control of loiterers and vagrants. If the "undesireables" could be controlled, and if traffic could be successfully diverted, a part-time mall would be a safe, attractive tourist attraction. Best of all from the merchant's viewpoint: such a mall would be good for business.

A particularly noteworthy suggestion is the idea for a week-long festival to be held in the summer. The street could be closed for 9 days, with the merchants holding sidewalk sales and special attractions. The promotion and success of this festival would encourage people to see Yonge Street as a safe and exciting place to shop and stroll. It was suggested that such a mall would be short term and would thereby avoid the problems encountered with previous malls and vagrants. It would be long term enough that many people would be able to come and experience the street. These people would then be much more likely to return.

DELIVERIES

QUESTION 14a: Do you take deliveries from the street or the lane?

RESPONSES:	STREET	LANE	BOTH	TOTAL
#	40	53	16	109
%	36.7	48.6	14.7	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS COMMENTS

-there should be a special delivery time so trucks don't get ticketed. Wherever they park to make deliveries, they get ticketed.
-the street--we don't have a back door.
-we prefer the street so that we can see what they're delivering.
-the side door opens onto an alley that trucks can't get into--so it's more convenient for them to stop out front.
-small cartons come in the front; bigger cartons come in the back.
-delivery trucks have been blocked in by parked cars.
-our lane is a constant source of aggravation. The 21 McGill members use the lane as a parking lot and aren't ticketed or towed.

COMMENTARY

Over 50% of the merchants use the street for some or all of their deliveries. The problem lies with the accessibility of the lanes. Some merchants have no lanes while others' lanes are blocked by parked cars. They complain that cars block access to their lanes. Because the lanes are blocked, the deliveries must be made from the front. The drivers don't want to be ticketed, so they rush through as quickly as possible. The merchants would like to either have a special time for delivery from the street or to have a more stringent enforcement of the parking regulations affecting their lanes.

IMPROVEMENTS TO EXTERIORS OF BUILDINGS

QUESTION 15a: Would an improvement to the exterior of your store/building be a good investment for strengthening your business.

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	70	32	7	109
%	64.2	29.4	6.4	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-we just made an improvement--we have new signs.
-I'll admit that there is a certain amount of bad taste in our exterior.
-an attractive building is eye-catching.
-no, we're already o.k. looking.
-it's not my building.
-our sign is our best investment.
-we're in the process--we're going to put up new signs.

COMMENTARY

The merchants who did not want to make improvements usually said that an improvement would increase business, but that the building was owned by a landlord who is not interested in renovating. Those who were interested had usually already begun changes or were about to make changes. These changes often entailed larger signs.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Question 16: Do you know what a Business Improvement Area is?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	15	89	0	104
%	14.4	85.6	0	100

Question 17a: Should your section of Yonge Street have a Business Improvement Area?

Responses:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	57	33	19	109
%	52.3	30.3	17.4	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-if Yonge Street is going to improve, businesses will have to work together
-Yonge Street is the focus of Toronto. It deserves special treatment
-worth a try
-it would build a sense of community
-BIA only works in an area with a distinctive identity
-not a universal cure-all
-different groups would have different interests

COMMENTARY

There is an extremely low recognition rate [14.4%] for the term 'B.I.A.'. The study team explained to the merchants that it is an area where the businesspeople have organized an association to improve their area. Once recognized by the City, they would be able to pool a levy which every merchant would pay towards improvements. It was stressed that a majority of the merchants would have to be in favor of the B.I.A. before it could be implemented. Two examples given of Toronto B.I.A.s were Old Cabbagetown and Bloor West Village.

Once the pros and cons of the B.I.A. program had been explained, the merchants were asked if their section of Yonge Street should have a Business Improvement Area. 52.3% think their section could use such an area. The merchants who liked the idea feels that Yonge Street needs one to improve trade. As one merchant said, "Everyone wants to improve business".

Other merchants feel that it would be difficult to implement a B.I.A. The stores in the study area are diverse and very competitive. One comment was, "It would be good to have the individual stores act as a group, but I can't see a way to get this going. It's not easy to get together--these are cut-throat people."

There is the feeling that no one wants to spend their own money on improvements. Some prefer that the City make improvements. The majority of the

merchants surveyed are tenants, and would be hard-pressed to pay additional fees because they have very high rents. It was suggested that the landlords be forced to make improvements. One thing that should be noted is that some of the merchants who do not want a B.I.A. do however want physical improvements made to their section of Yonge Street.

WINTER CONDITIONS

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS

-the City should plow because of the problems of weekend snowfall and vacant stores
-the City should plow and tax the owners
-snow banks are dangerous for people trying to cross the street
-snow banks cut down on the already limited sidewalks
-impose fines for merchants who don't shovel
-there is a need for a unified effort
-the city is already doing a fine job

COMMENTARY

About half of the merchants [48.1%] either have no ideas on how to improve winter conditions or think that it is fine as it is. A number of merchants said that the City is already doing a good job. However, other merchants are dissatisfied, and suggest that a number of things be done. Some of the merchants suggest that the sidewalk be covered as has been done in other cities. Other merchants say that they have seen this done, and that it wouldn't work on Yonge Street because the buildings are all of different heights.

Merchants also complained about some stores that are slow to clean their sidewalks. They said they hope the City will be diligent in in imposing fines on merchants who don't clean their sidewalks.

Others think that the City should be responsible for clearing the sidewalks because Yonge Street is the main street of Toronto. Some said that they would be willing to pay extra taxes for this service because it would ensure that all the sidewalks are cleared.

Another concern expressed about the winter conditions on Yonge is about the snow banks created by the snow plows. These snow plows limit the width of the street, and more importantly, create a hazardous condition for pedestrians attempting to cross the street. One merchant said he had witnessed one person who tried to climb a particularly large snow bank in January and fell into the path of a truck. Fortunately the truck was able to stop in time. The snowbanks are undoubtably undesireable. One merchant offers a possible solution: that the City use 'Metromelt' along Yonge Street.

UPPER-STORY SPACE

QUESTION 19A: Do you think that the second and third floor space above Yonge Street shops is a good location for business?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	6	5	1	12
%	50	41.7	8.3	100

SELECTED MERCHANTS' COMMENTS (what kind of businesses would find this space attractive?)

-places that needed to minimize overhead
-there's a psychological lift given by leaving the street level--it's a bit of an escape.
-we were already established when we moved upstairs. We miss some passersby but do quite well anyways.
-our business comes mostly by phone.
-clubs, discos.
-offices, travel agents and other businesses that don't need passersby would do well here.
-second-hand bookstores.
-restaurants with a reputation.

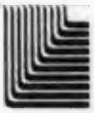
COMMENTARY

It was generally acknowledged that businesses that need to attract passersby to be successful. The appeal of a ground level store with large windows does not exist for second storey businesses. They must rely either on an established reputation to ensure customers or it must be a business that does a lot of business by phone. The largest attraction of the second and third storey businesses on Yonge is the address. Businesses acquire a Yonge Street address without the high overhead of a ground level space.

MERCHANTS' GENERAL COMMENTS

-Plant trees to make street more attractive and pleasant.
-Remove undesireable people and objects.
-Lampposts, flags, and trees would make the street more important.
-Reduce the number of cars--they create too much noise.
-Would like to see south of Dundas to Front Street developed with projects like the Wintergarden.
-Would like to see a one-week long mall. It would be festive and fun while avoiding the deterioration problem that happens if it goes on too long.
-Would like to see renovations and better stores.
-Have Sunday openings.
-Have more foot patrols.
-Change the awning and sign laws--they should allow overhanging signs.
-Make a mall. Designate it a tourist area. Open it on Sundays.
-Prostitutes are bad for business.
-Make it into a one-way street and widen the sidewalks.
-Get rid of liquidators who put out tables on the sidewalk.
-Make area around Shuter into an arts centre. Open the Wintergarden and do something with the Colonial--make it into an entertainment centre.
-The street is fine the way it is.
-More clean parks.
-More of a tourist attraction. Make up Yonge Street directories and distribute them to tourists in hotels. The businesses could be divided into separate categories.
-Force landlords to improve buildings.
-Install public washrooms. Our own are always being vandalized and graffitied by non-patrons.
-Close Yonge off to traffic on week-ends.
-I've been in many countries and Yonge Street is quite clean except for the bums.
-Should open the street on Sundays. The tourists need time to shop.
-Change the legislation that controls occupation of second and upward floors.
-Want the vagrancy law reinstated.
-Get rid of pinball arcades. Their group of people don't do much for the area.
-Have more outside activities, for example, sidewalk sales, outside merchandising, bands.
-Couldn't care less about the cars.
-Get rid of the parades. Have them on University Avenue instead.
-It's essential to provide more parking nearby.
-Vendors harm the atmosphere. They add clutter and make Yonge look less like a place where serious business is done.
-If there were more bike racks, more cyclists would be attracted downtown.
-Improve the garbage cans. The present ones have small holes and are noisy
-Put prostitutes into special zones so that they can be controlled because you can't get rid of them.

APPENDIXES



APPENDIX 1

DELTA CHELSEA INN

NOTES FROM MEETING WITH MR. STEPHEN PHILLIPS
GENERAL MANAGER, DELTA CHELSEA INN
FRIDAY, MAY 17, 1985

1. The Delta Chelsea Inn has a 95% occupancy rate year round, with an average of 1500 guests a night. This is one of the highest occupancy rates in the city. In Mr. Phillips eyes, this proves that locating near Yonge Street is good for the hotel.

2. The Chelsea Inn has not received a report, in seven years of operation, of a single mugging, assault, or other such complaint, occurring to one of their guests on Yonge Street.

3. Mr Phillips did not feel that the Chelsea Inn's expansion will rule out the Yonge Street pedestrian mall option.

4. Many of the Chelsea Inn's guests visit the Eaton Centre and usually walk down Yonge Street to get there. Yonge Street is, however, an important secondary attraction.

APPENDIX 2

ELGIN-WINTERGARDEN

THE EFFECT OF THE ELGIN-WINTERGARDEN ON YONGE STREET

In a conversation Michael Heitshu had with Janis Barlow of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture on May 8, 1985, the effect of the Elgin Wintergaden on the Yonge Street area was discussed. Since Cats opened in March, there has been a noticable increase in the number of high-end-of-market patrons for certain restaurants on and around Yonge Street. This trend is expected to continue. Ms. Barlow described the Elgin as the keystone for the theatre district, and as a result she expected that a number of establishments would grow to serve this segment of the market.

The kind of establishments that can be expected on Yonge as a result of the vibrancy of the Elgin are those that service the theatre's patrons. They include such establishments as high-end and trendy restaurants, places to go for a snack after the show, and stores that may cater to the people that are attracted to the theatre--such as fashionable clothing stores. Stores of this type might not be open after the show, but they could get business from theatre patrons who window shop before and after the show and then come back to buy at a later date.

More importantly, this theatre might be the final impetus for the development of a larger theatre district in the area to the east of Yonge Street. If this did indeed happen, the impact on the south end of Yonge Street would most likely be large. For example, many of the better restaurants on Yonge are largely dependent on whatever lunchtime and early dinner business is available. After that, potential patrons do not usually frequent Yonge Street. With a theatre district, however, these same restaurants would have a whole new crowd to serve. This could be a very positive step for improving the diversity of Yonge Street.

The Elgin-Wintergarden also serves two other roles. It is a definite tourist attaction--this is always positive--and it is planned to be a location for screenings during movie festivals. These two roles add more people to the area, an essential ingredient to a strong Yonge Street, especially since these added people may be of the type that are likely to spend money.

Ms. Barlow is optimistic about the future of the Elgin-Wintergarden. It has the blessing of the Ontario Government, the support of the City, and a seating capacity that serves a unique role in Toronto. Its strength is likely to be that it is almost the only theatre in the City that has the size, and yet the intimacy, to put on larger scale Canadian productions. This lessens the need for competition with other theatres, and as a result increases the theatre's stability.

The Elgin-Wintergarden, then, is likely to be one of the major motivators of a merchant-induced rehabilitation of, at least, the south end of the study area.

APPENDIX 3

TABLES

TABLES

QUESTION 1: Are you familiar with the City's actions to improve Yonge Street?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	42	64	10	116
%	36.2	55.2	8.6	100

QUESTION 3A: Do you feel the City's actions to improve Yonge Street are moving quickly enough?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	19	61	16	96
%	19.8	63.5	16.7	100

QUESTION 5A: Is Yonge Street changing?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	74	28	10	112
%	66.1	25	8.9	100

QUESTION 5B: If yes, how is it changing?

RESPONSES:	BETTER	WORSE	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	40	21	13	74
%				

QUESTION 6A: What is happening to your business volume compared to previous years?

RESPONSES:	UP	DOWN	SAME	TOTAL
#	40	28	36	104
%	38.5	26.9	34.6	100

QUESTION 6B: Is this because of Yonge Street?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	38	41	14	93
%	40.9	44.1	15	100

QUESTION 8A: Do you feel that street vending can have a permanent role to play in the Yonge Street environment?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	54	38	6	98
%	55.1	38.8	6.1	100

QUESTION 9A: Do you feel that there is a high turnover of Yonge Street businesses?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	57	43	10	110
%	51.8	39.1	9.1	100

QUESTION 11A: Would the widening and repaving of the Yonge Street sidewalks improve the business atmosphere of the street?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	74	29	10	113
%	65.5	25.7	8.8	100

QUESTION 12A: Is the volume of Yonge Street automobile traffic important to your business?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	26	82	5	113
%	23	72.6	4.4	100

QUESTION 13A: Do you think that automobiles should be permanently or temporarily prohibited from Yonge Street, from Gerrard to Dundas?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	52	37	12	101
%	51.5	36.6	11.9	100

QUESTION 14A: Do you take deliveries from the street or the lane?

RESPONSES:	STREET	LANE	BOTH	TOTAL
#	40	53	16	109
%	36.7	48.6	14.7	100

QUESTION 15A: Would an improvement to the exterior of your store/building be a good investment for strengthening your business.

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	70	32	7	109
%	64.2	29.4	6.4	100

QUESTION 15B: Would you be prepared to make such an investment?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	39	34	15	88
%	44.3	38.6	17.1	100

QUESTION 16: Do you know what a B.I.A. is?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	TOTAL
#	15	89	104
%	14.4	85.6	100

QUESTION 17A: Should your section of Yonge Street have a B.I.A.?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	57	33	19	109
%	52.3	30.3	17.4	100

QUESTION 18: Can you suggest a way of improving winter conditions on Yonge Street for your customers?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	49	51	6	106
%	46.2	48.1	5.7	100

QUESTION 19A: Do you think that the second and third floor space above Yonge Street shops is a good location for business?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	6	5	1	12
%	50	41.7	8.3	100

QUESTION 22: Would you be interested in taking part in discussions on the future of Yonge Street?

RESPONSES:	YES	NO	NOT SURE	TOTAL
#	56	27	13	96
%	58.4	28.1	13.5	100

APPENDIX 4

CROSS TABULATIONS

CROSS TABULATION

CHANGES ON YONGE STREET AGAINST TYPES OF STORES

	HOW IS YONGE STREET CHANGING?					
TYPE OF STORE	BETTER		WORSE		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	10	66.7	5	33.3	15	100
specialty retail	9	90	1	10	10	100
restaurants and bars	7	58.3	5	41.7	12	100
shoppers goods	8	57.1	6	43.9	14	100
miscellaneous	6	60	4	40	10	100
TOTAL	40	65.6	21	34.4	61	100

BUSINESS VOLUME AGAINST TYPE OF STORE

	HOW IS YOUR BUSINESS VOLUME COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS?							
TYPE OF STORE	UP		DOWN		SAME		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	10	37	9	33.3	8	29.7	27	100
specialty retail	6	33.3	5	27.8	7	38.9	18	100
restaurants and bars	12	46.2	7	26.9	7	26.9	26	100
shoppers goods	10	43.5	6	26.1	7	30.4	23	100
miscellaneous	2	20	1	10	7	70	10	100
TOTAL	40	38.5	28	26.9	36	34.6	104	100

BUSINESS TURNOVER AGAINST TYPES OF STORES

	IS THERE A HIGH TURNOVER OF YONGE STREET BUSINESSES?							
TYPE OF STORE	YES		NO		NOT SURE		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	15	51.7	9	31	5	17.3	29	100
specialty retail	10	58.8	6	35.3	1	5.9	17	100
restaurants and bars	17	63	7	25.9	3	11.1	27	100
shoppers goods	14	60.9	9	39.1	0		23	100
miscellaneous	1	7.1	12	85.8	1	7.1	14	100
TOTAL	57	52.3	43	39.5	10	9.2	109	100

SIDEWALK WIDENING AGAINST TYPES OF STORES

	SHOULD YONGE STREET SIDEWALKS BE WIDENED AND REPAVED?							
TYPE OF STORE	YES		NO		NOT SURE		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	21	72.4	6	20.7	2	6.9	29	100
specialty retail	12	57.2	7	33.3	2	9.5	21	100
restaurants and bars	19	67.9	5	17.8	4	14.3	28	100
shoppers goods	15	68.2	5	22.7	2	9.1	22	100
miscellaneous	7	53.9	6	46.1	0		13	100
TOTAL	74	65.5	29	25.6	10	8.9	113	100

SUPPORT FOR B.I.A. AGAINST TYPE OF STORE

	SHOULD YOUR SECTION OF YONGE STREET HAVE A B.I.A.?							
TYPE OF STORE	YES		NO		NOT SURE		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	13	48.2	9	33.3	5	18.5	27	100
specialty retail	10	47.6	9	42.9	2	9.5	21	100
restaurants and bars	16	57.1	7	25	5	17.9	28	100
shoppers goods	10	47.6	7	33.3	4	19.1	21	100
miscellaneous	8	61.5	2	15.4	3	23.1	13	100
TOTAL	57	51.8	34	30.9	19	17.3	110	100

IMPORTANCE OF AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC AGAINST TYPE OF STORE

	IS THE VOLUME OF AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC ON YONGE IMPORTANT TO YOUR BUSINESS?							
TYPE OF STORE	YES		NO		NOT SURE		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
apparel and accesory	8	28.6	18	64.3	2	7.1	28	100
specialty retail	8	38.1	13	61.9	0		21	100
restaurants and bars	4	14.3	23	82.1	1	3.6	28	100
shoppers goods	3	13	19	82.6	1	4.4	23	100
miscellaneous	3	23.1	9	69.2	1	7.7	13	100
TOTAL	26	23	82	72.6	5	4.4	113	100

APPENDIX 5

YONGE STREET BUSINESS / MERCHANTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Yonge Street Business / Merchants Questionnaire

Address:

Business Name: Telephone no.:

Type of business: Premises owned: ___

Names of (A) business owner rented: ___

(B) person interviewed (and title)

Interview date: Interviewer's initials:

1. Are you familiar with the City's actions to improve Yonge Street?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

2. If yes, which actions are you thinking of?

3a. Do you feel that the City's efforts to improve the street are moving quickly enough?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

3b. Why / why not?

4. What would you most like to see changed?

5. Is Yonge Street changing?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

5b. If yes, how is it changing?

For Better_____ For Worse_____

5c. In what ways?

6a. What is happening to your business volume compared to previous years?

Up_____ Down_____ About the same_____

6b. Is this because of Yonge Street?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

7. If your level of business is below your expectations, what do you attribute this to?

8a. Do you feel that street vending can have a permanent role to play in the Yonge Street environment?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

pblc

8b. If yes, how would you regulate the vendors?

9a. Do you feel that there is a high turnover of Yonge Street business?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

9b. If yes, what is causing this?

10. What could be done to encourage Eaton Centre shoppers to come out on to Yonge Street?

11a. Would the widening and repaving of the Yonge Street sidewalks improve the business atmosphere of the street?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure____

11b. Why / why not?

12a. Is the volume of Yonge Street automobile traffic important to your business?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

nblc

12b. Why / Why not?

13a. Do you think automobiles should be permanently or temporarily prohibited from Yonge Street, from Gerrard to Dundas?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

13b. Why/Why not?

14a. Do you take deliveries from the street or the lane?

Street_____ Lane_____ Both_____

14b. Why?

15a. Would an improvement to the exterior of your store / building be a good investment for strengthening your business?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

15b. Would you be prepared to make such an investment?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

15b. Why / Why not?

16. Do you know what a B.I.A. is?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

17a. Should your section of Yonge Street have a Business Improvement Area?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

17b. Why / why not?

18a. Can you suggest a way or ways of improving winter conditions on Yonge Street for your customers?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

18b. If yes, how?

ASK NOS. 17a, b, and 18 OF UPPER FLOOR TENANTS ONLY

19a. Do you think that the second and third floor space above Yonge Street shops is a good location for business?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____

19b. Why / why not?

20. What king of businesses do you think would find this space attractive?

21. Do you have any concluding thoughts on ways of improving Yonge Street?

22. Would you be interested in taking part in discussions on the future of Yonge Street?

Yes_____ No_____ Not Sure_____